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SUBJECT: ARGENTINA: MISSION CAMPAIGN TO REDUCE ENERGY USE

¶1. At a typical Argentine barbecue in January, Ambassador Martinez challenged Mission Buenos Aires staff to turn out the lights. Inspired by President Obama and Secretary Clinton's Green Embassies initiative, Mission Buenos Aires is embarking on an internal energy challenge: to reduce energy use in the Embassy and staff residences by ten percent in 2010. This campaign, called "Ten in Ten," calls on all embassy employees to make small, everyday efforts to reduce energy consumption—such as turning off lights and moderating office temperatures—for significant energy savings.

¶2. The campaign was kicked off with a lunchtime celebration featuring local organic food and plant vendors, as well as information on environment-friendly steps employees can take at the home and the office. Ambassador Martinez and DCM Kelly personally pledged to do their parts to reduce the daily energy use in the Front Office and their own homes and encouraged all staff members to do the same. An environmental journalist from a local television channel covered the event to show Argentines that even Americans overseas are making efforts to reduce their carbon footprint, while online journals featured a press release about the event.

¶3. The "Ten in Ten" campaign was developed by the Embassy's Green Team, a group of Argentine and U.S. staff volunteers. Understanding that building use is responsible for the majority of the Embassy's carbon footprint, the Green Team consulted with the Embassy's Management Section and an Office of Overseas Building Operations (OBO) Energy Audit Team in Buenos Aires. The Management Section is working with OBO to replace the Embassy's chillers with more energy efficient models, is considering installing a "white roof" to reflect heat and lower air conditioning requirements, and is exploring future options such as installing motion-sensor lights. The campaign will complement such structural changes by encouraging behavioral changes for immediate energy savings.

¶4. Every three months, the Green Team will benchmark progress by publishing overall energy reduction as compared to the same period the previous year, by recognizing "Green MVPs," and by posting the top five best residences in terms of energy reduction. Green Wardens from each section will be responsible for educating colleagues and making the rounds of their area every day/week to ensure lights and printers have been turned off. The Green Team will also bring in local guest speakers, including a British Embassy employee who ran a similar campaign, and a local Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Architecture Professional. Through such efforts, the campaign aims to build the Embassy community, reduce its energy footprint, and inspire lasting green habits, making U.S. Mission Buenos Aires a model in the city and the region.

MARTINEZ